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## CONTENTS

Vol. XXIX

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No. 3

My Experiments With Kuchipudi by Vempati Chinna Satyam .....	5
The Concept Of Bhakti In Karnatic Music by V. V. Srivatsa .....	11
Bhakti And Music by P. N. Krishnamoorthy.....	25
Raga Swaroopa In Carnatic Music by Narada.....	27
The Sitar And Amir Khusrao by Dr. (Mrs.) Lovely Sharma.....	33
Rejuvenation Of The Veena As A Concert Instrument - Some Solutions by Mangalam Muthuswamy.....	37
Music Appreciation - Part 1 by Dr. (Smt.) Geetha Ravikumar.....	39
Obituary.....Shri T. S. Balakrishna Sastrigal by P. N. Krishnamoorthy.....	43
Music Competition 2002 - 2003 List of Prize Winners.....	45

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## IN FOCUS

In this issue, the greatest exponent of Kuchipudi of present times, looks back with humility laced with satisfaction at the innovations he has been making over the years, in this dance format. His efforts in this area have not only kindled the imagination of the audience, but has also been the subject of approbation and admiration from Kuchipudi afficianados. In this article he looks back at his innovations and wonders whether these were made for the sake of experimentation or whether they were an expression of his creative inner self. He explains some of these innovations.

Bhakti has been the cornerstone of all creative efforts in Carnatic music. Two articles highlight various aspects of the role of Bhakti in Carnatic music.

An article on the Sitar which tends to present its historical aspects from an entirely different angle finds a place in this issue. Another article lamenting the current loss of popularity of the Veena and suggesting steps to reverse the trends also finds a place.

The cardinal role of raga bhava and raga swaroopa in Carnatic music is highlighted in another article. Considering the current state of the musician-rasika relationship, the role of the subject of music appreciation cannot be sufficiently overemphasised. An article on this subject is included.

The world of Harikatha, an art form with not too many effective practitioners today, has lost one of its doyens. An obituary finds place in this issue. Known for his erudition, diction, vast repertoire and emotive presentation, the veteran with his bhava laden music had set for himself a noble mission to accomplish - that of spreading devotion and instilling moral values in the minds of his listeners.



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## MY EXPERIMENTS WITH KUCHIPUDI\*

by Vempati Chinna Satyam

*The author is the world renowned Kuchipudi maestro who has been largely instrumental in obtaining international recognition for this classical dance of Andhra Pradesh. His intense yearning for propagating the art and his restless creative urge has brought about several innovations within the traditional parameters. Founder-Director of Kuchipudi Art Academy, Chennai, he is acclaimed for the scintillating dance dramas he has produced.*

Many a time I heard people lauding, scholars calling me an innovator-a man who rejuvenated Kuchipudi dance form. At this juncture of my life, I thought I should pause and look back upon my endeavors and the so called innovations, if any, I have made. A voice in me said, 'Are these innovations made for the sake of experimentation or an outpouring of my own creative faculties that broke new ground?'

I remember, as a lad, I was restless throughout, like a melting pot. My mainstay during those formative years, the 1950s, were my cousin Late Sri Vempati Peda Satyam, my *Guru* Late Sri Vedantam Lakshminarayana Sastry and the performances of Smt. Kamala Lakshman which I attended, foregoing a meal or two. In fact, they helped me in realizing the hidden potential of kuchipudi art form, both in its technique and *abhinaya*.

The turning point in my life came

about with an invitation in 1959 from Jawahar Bharathi - a college at Kavali, to choreograph a dance for its students, at the bidding of cine director B. N. Reddy. It provided a much needed opportunity to give a shape to my restlessness, something original, a free flight to my imagination. At this appropriate moment came the helping hand from two creative persons Dr. S. V. Bhujangaraya Sarma and Shri Dwaram Bhavanarayana Rao, the writer and the music composer, respectively. Though I choreographed a group and solo numbers at Kavali (presented during the Inter - Collegiate Youth Festival at Mysore in 1959), it paved the way for more innovative and productive creations of art during the later years such as *Chandalika*.

It is not my wish to make this an exhaustive autobiographical account of my experiments. It is neither possible nor desirable at this stage. I want to articulate a few attempts I made experimenting the

\*This article was published in the Commemorative Volume of Kuchipudi Mahotsav 1999 by Kuchipudi Kala Kendra, Mumbai and is reproduced here with the permission of the publisher, Sri G. M. Sarma and the editor, Smt. D. Subadra Murthy. No part of this article can be copied or reproduced without the permission of the Publisher/Editor.

whole gamut of the Kuchipudi form, namely :- content, technique, music, decor, costumes and make-up in some of my productions.

Speaking in the broader sense, I experienced an irrepressible desire to make my performances more appealing by making them simple but exquisitely aesthetic so as to make them reach all types of audiences.

I chose to largely confine myself to *Angika* and *Sattvika Abhinayas*. In the process, all my dance dramas were written adhering to this prescription and mainly in lyrics, without *Vachika*, in the form of dialogues. In a way, I should say, the urge to make my work different from that of others prompted me to unravel the unexplored avenues in every facet of dance drama. In music, besides the conventional *Camata ragas*, one can also find the inclusion of rare *ragas*, of Carnatic style as well as those of Hindusthani, aptly suiting the *bhava* and *rasa* enshrined in a song.

In the decor, I intended to be suggestive and in costumes and make-up, as aesthetic as possible. My dance dramas are thus created, right from the very first major experimentation with *Chandalika*.

*Chandalika*, which was produced to commemorate *Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore's* centenary, is a story penned by the Nobel Laureate himself. Being a subject which depicts a contemporary social problem, it threw a challenge to me, since traditionally, we Kuchipudi practitioners were largely dealing with mythological themes. I consider that I

made a significant experimentation in *Chandalika*. The reasons being, one, the unconventional nature of the theme, two, its contemporaneity and three, it was aimed for the students of the college, and not for any sophisticated audience. A fresh batch of students was at my disposal for experimentation. Thus, *Chandalika* became an experiment in itself.

Responding to the requirements of the theme, I adapted my dance technique and created a folk milieu in the dances of flower vendors, milkmaids and bangle sellers. In the process, the dances were choreographed giving a lilt to the dance movements of the milkmaids and buoyancy to those of the bangle sellers, adopting *gatis* like *chaturasra* and *tisra*. However, the significant part of my experimentation in *Chandalika* is the dance I composed for Maya, mother of Prakriti (the main character in *Chandalika*). Conceding to the request of her daughter to bring back the *Bauddha Bhikshu*, Maya invokes the evil spirits. In this scene, there is no song. I took the help of instrumental music and rhythm intermingled with *jatis* that contain such sounds, which create an atmosphere of something unusual like, *dhim*, *tadhim* etc. In choreography, along with Maya, a group of six girls representing the spirits were introduced. Their costumes were suitably made with flowing garments and hair let loose. The movements were large, reaching out into the air, creating circles in space. Starting with a new tempo, the dance of Maya, encircled by six spirits who dance at her

command, reaches its climax in fast tempo within a span of ten minutes. Though some expressed their doubts about its appeal during the practice sessions, my persistence to retain it proved to be right, since it is one of the scenes that really moved the audiences.

The success of *Chandalika* gave me a renewed energy and confidence. With that, I ventured to take up another major work, **Padmavati Srinivasa Kalyanam**. The treatment of *Padmavati Srinivasa Kalyanam* differed from *Chandalika* as it is a mythological theme. My main thrust was to further the innovations which I had previously made and the theme came in handy replete with variety. There are celestial beings like Mahavishnu, Lakshmi, Brahma, Saraswati, Shiva, Parvati and ordinary humans like the saints, King Chola and Vakulamata. Besides there are also the down-to-earth characters like Lakshmi disguised as *Gollabhama* and the soothsayer. This gave me an opportunity to create a wide variety in music, dance and script.

Right from the moment we conceived the theme, myself, Dr. Bhujangaraya Sarma (the script writer) and Shri Sangeetha Rao (music director), even though initially Shri Bhavanarayana Rao was associated for music composition) were constantly discussing and each time modifying and composing either the script or music, to suit to the needs of the performance. Perhaps it could be said that they gave shape to my imagination in terms of using a word at some point or making a

note at the other. Such perfect rapport we had with each other in this team work is the major cause that makes my productions what they are.

In *Padmavati Srinivasa Kalyanam*, the significant experiments I should mention include the scenes where Vakulamata meditates upon Krishna and waits eagerly for his arrival in the incarnation of Srinivasa, and that of the cowherdess. In the former, Vakula, being a woman mellow with age, could hardly give scope for dance and it made me think seriously how to make the scene more interesting. In the process of choreographing *Padmavati Srinivasa Kalyanam*, I happened to attend a program at Mailavaram in Cuddupati District. During the day, I went for a stroll to a nearby archaeological site listening to the song of Vakulamata in my Walkman and simultaneously conceiving its choreography. Among the scattered sculptures at the site, I saw a splendid piece of a mother and child. Though the heads of both were missing, the way she held the child close to her bosom was really arresting and kept me thinking. After all, the child is so dear to a mother and more so if the child is Krishna himself. Further, any mother rejoices imagining the child, even in his absence. Then it occurred to me why should I not create a child Krishna for Vakulamata and it quickly took shape in the dance drama. As a result, on the song of Vakula, the idol of Krishna, manifests into a real Krishna and her imagination is brought to the stage with the dance of child Krishna.



In the dance of the cowherdess again, the problem was how to show cows on the stage. Then we planned to use two artists one behind the other, bending forward. They are totally covered on all sides with a white cloth with a tail at the back and the artist in front wearing the mask of the cow. So we had two cows with four artists, one big and the other a calf. The movement of the cows, how they walk, move their heads, the way they move the legs are choreographed. They dance on the rhythm along with *Gollabhama*.

Alongside, in the decor, I used simple and suggestive properties like a swan and a lotus, painted on a curtain and hung at the back as a drop, to suggest *Brahmaloka*, and a crescent moon and a trident (*Trishula*) to suggest *Kailasa*.

The next work that immediately followed was *Bhamakalapam*. *Kalapam* was, for a long time, practiced in the Kuchipudi tradition. A re-choreography of it was to be made with a lot of attention and care. I sat together with Dr. Bhujangaraya Sarma and with Shri Sangeeta Rao, trying to abridge the script, to suit the contemporary time duration. Further, to make it more appealing to a wider range of audiences, mainly cosmopolitan in nature, I chose to minimize the dialogues and in their place, introduce verses that give scope to *abhinaya* through gestures and facial expression, which can appeal to any kind of audience. Each and every *daruvu* right from the *Jada vrittantam* (the story of the popular plait of Satyabhama) was

rewritten and choreographed. However, out of these *daruvus*, I wish to mention the *daruvu*, *Siggayenoyamma*. It was traditionally performed with Satyabhama covering her face with a veil suggesting her bashfulness. However, I felt that this should be done through *abhinaya* and, in the process, developed a dialogue between Satyabhama and Madhavi, her close confidante. The context of this *daruvu* is that Madhavi asks Satyabhama to describe and spell out the name of her husband. As any tradition-bound wife, she hesitates and then follows the *daruvu*, *Siggayenoyamma*. In the *daruvu*, I tried to create action and through it, communicate the form of Krishna, which is immediately followed by a counter action in an exaggerated manner by Madhavi to bring an element of humour. In this, first Satyabhama writes down the name of Krishna, like *Kaliya mardhana*, *Govardhanoddharana* and the like. This *daruvu* helped in not only affording a wide scope for *abhinaya*, but also providing a comic relief. Besides this, *Lekha* is another instance where I introduced *abhinaya* into what was otherwise pure narrative.

A dance drama should provide a wholesome audio-visual feast, with a balanced combination of both *nritta* and *abhinaya*. Keeping this in mind, variations in rhythm and *taal*, is done in the *daruvu*, *Yendubotivi*, in which Satyabhama goes in search of Krishna. The predominance of rhythm could be found throughout this *daruvu* which ends with an elaborate *Konugolu*, where

intricate rhythmic variations are employed. These are a few of the many examples that could be cited from *Bhama Kalapam*.

Coming to the recent dance dramas, I would like to explain an experiment I made in *Hara Vilasam* during its choreography, especially in the scene of *Satidahana*, where Sati burns herself after being humiliated by Daksha. The question was how to show it. A ready-made suggestion was that it should be portrayed with the help of lighting technique. I was not convinced. After prolonged thought, I felt I should create the needed effect through movement and *aharya*. A group of girls dressed in red were used for the same. As soon as Sati tries to immolate herself, these girls rush on to the stage in a single file with swift movement, throwing up their arms while quickly fluttering them to suggest the flames and encircle Sati, indicating the flames engulfing her. This was one experiment which was applauded by no less a person than Dr. Kapila Vatsyayan.

Well, for reasons known and perhaps also unknown, my dance dramas became popular with audiences and merited acclaim as great experiments. It makes me happy. Nevertheless, as a choreographer who added substantially to the solo repertoire of Kuchipudi, I would like to go on record making a few observations. When I first started choreographing dance dramas (early '60s), solo repertoire was limited. Most of the numbers then presented as solos were a part of the dance dramas

or the choreographic creations of my Guru Sri Vedantam Lakshminarayana Sastry. As a performer and a teacher, I firmly believed that for the wider spread of tradition, a strong solo repertoire is a prerequisite. I made attempts strengthening this segment of Kuchipudi dance.

In this endeavor, my experimentation was carried out with both traditional as well as new numbers. With regard to the traditional numbers, I largely re-choreographed them to suit the solo stage presentation. One important aspect was giving a prescribed structure to different numbers like the *Tarangams* as well as stylise the entry and exit of each number. In the entries, the dancer was made to walk on the stage on a given *gati*, in three speeds, viz, the *vilamba*, *madhyama*, and *dhruta* *layas*. This enables the audience to grasp, in the very entry of the dancer, her command over *taal* and rhythm.

Right from the early period of my life, I believed that Kuchipudi dance is deeply rooted in the *Natya Sastra* tradition. This made me go back again and again to the grammar of *Natya Sastra* and improve my grasp of the art theoretically and also in translating it into performance. Consequently, I included the technical aspect of *angikabhinaya* such as, the *Nritta hasta*, *Chari* and others in both the pure dance and *Nritya* sequences. For example, in the *Parvesa daruvu* of Usha, taken from the *Usha Parinaya Yakshaganaanam*, when I re-choreographed it as a solo number, I used *Bhaumi Chari* like *Vichyava*.

Syandita, Urudvritta, Apasyandita, Mattalli and Akasiki Chari like Vidyutbhranta and the like. In the process, a variety is also brought into the *Nritta* and *Nritya* technique of Kuchipudi.

In the *abhinaya* numbers, my aim was to maintain the dramatic element which was the main cause for the popularity of Kuchipudi form. However, I refused to follow the usual path of choreography, of composing *abhinaya* to the words in the lyric or just to enact the song without understanding the milieu of the song and the *Kaviridaya*. Here, I wish to narrate my experience when I composed *abhinaya* to the song *Ksheerasagara sayana* of Saint Thyagaraja. When I ventured into it, I wondered why the poet had used such an expression to address Lord Vishnu. Trying to go deeper into it, I went through the life history of Saint Thyagaraja and in that I found an incident, which I could correlate to this song. The incident is as follows. The *Beram*, consisting of Lord Rama along with Seeta, Lakshmana and Hanumanta, which Thyagaraja used to worship daily, suddenly disappears. Unable to find it anywhere, he proceeds to the banks of Cauvery river and fearless of the flood, plunges into the swirling waters in search of the idol. Suddenly he spots it in the lying posture on the river bed, deep under the water. Overcome with joy, he came out with the song *Ksheerasagara sayana*. This choreography of mine attracted both scholars and lay people.

The other numbers that followed suit are *En pallikondeerayya Sri Ranganatha* and *Krishna nee begane baro*, to mention only a few. This kind of an in-depth understanding of the entire setting of the song, coupled with imagination, would not only make the composition original and beautiful, but would also go to enrich the tradition. Besides the regular numbers, that were adopted in the solo repertoire of Kuchipudi, I took the songs of poets like Annamacharya, Uthukkadu Venkatasubba Iyer, Dikshitar, Shyama Sastry, which until then were mainly rendered in music concerts. These were my experiments with solos.

At this juncture, I would like to say that the Kuchipudi dance tradition, being a living art form, growth is inevitable. It continues to grow with each passing phase of history. At a given period of time, in the history of Kuchipudi dance, when it was in need of a fillip, I have ventured to make some innovations. But when I was involved in this process, I did not know that they would kindle the imagination of the audience and their appreciation would in turn, make me put in work that is more creative. This is a dialectical process and a quest, a long quest for excellence and it goes on. My experiments will continue till I breathe my last. The responsibility to carry forward this legacy and preserve it to posterity lies in the hands of the generations to come, because I am neither the beginning nor the end of the glorious Kuchipudi tradition. □

## THE CONCEPT OF BHAKTI IN KARNATIC MUSIC

by V. V. Srivatsa

गेयं गन्धर्वविद्याधर सुरनिकरैर्ध्वयमन्तः प्रमोदै-  
नित्यं योगीश्वराद्यैर्युवति निवह हृत्पङ्कजैः पेयमुञ्चैः ।  
सर्वानन्द प्रकाशं कुसुमशरकलाकेलि रङ्ग प्रदीपं  
नादब्रह्म प्रणोमि प्रतिदिवसमहं भूतये भूतिदं तत् ॥

आत्मा विवक्षमाणोऽयं मनः प्रेरयते मनः ।  
देहस्थं वद्विमाहन्ति सप्रेरयति मारुतम् ।  
ब्रह्मग्रन्थिस्थितः सोऽथ क्रमादूर्ध्वपथे चरन् ।  
नामि हृत्कण्ठमूर्धास्येग्वविभावयते ध्वनिम् ॥

अज्ञातविषयास्वादो बालः पर्यं किकातले ।  
रुदन् गोतामृतं पीत्वा हर्षोत्कर्षं प्रपद्यते ॥

The child crying in the cradle is consoled by music. Perhaps, the lullaby was the primeval form of music. Even reptiles and quadrupeds react to music:

कृष्णसर्पोऽपि तद्वीतं श्रुत्वा हर्षं प्रपद्यते ।  
तस्य गीतस्य माहात्म्यं के प्रशंसितुं शीते ॥

Such is the serenity, superiority and sanctity of music.

### Music

The individuated entity, the Samsarin - Jivatman, desires to express and impel the mind, which activates potential power (Vahni), thus stimulating the vital force, the wind (Marut). Wind emanating from the navel moves upwards through the heart, throat, cerebrum and manifests as sound. Self-expression motivates sound-production, making the unmanifest sound manifest.

"Heard melodies are sweet but those unheard  
Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on  
Not to the Sensual ear but more endeared  
Pipe to the spirit, ditties of no tone."

(Ode to the Grecian Urn)

Music, the aesthetic-culmination of sound, evokes universal reaction:

### Devotion

All religions have three integral divisions - morality, metaphysics and socio-obligations. The unity of religions need not be discussed at this stage. The Rig-Veda says :

एकोः सत् विप्र बहुधा वदन्ति ।

The Truth is one and scholars perceive it in different ways. The diversity of religions is attributed to the emphasis laid on the constituent divisions.

In Hinduism, self-realisation is the goal, the emphasis is on meta-physics. Three paths leading to self-realisation are *Jnana* (Knowledge), *Karma* (Action) and *Bhakti* (Devotion). In their full maturity, these three paths merge, although in the initial stages they appear

to be divergent paths of spiritual experience. All paths or methods aim at the purity of the mind, the sole condition of knowing God. Jesus Christ puts this great truth in oft-repeated words :

*"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God"*

The three functions - intellect, will and emotion have to be cleansed of ego. Jnana purifies the intellect, Karma, the will and Bhakti, emotions. The Bhagavat-Gita recommended adoption of the method best suited to one's nature. The dynamic can adopt Karma, the intellectual, Jnana. Bhakti, the easiest way, has no pre-requisites - it is open to all, the Sulabha Marga.

Concentration, dedication and devotion are inter-related terms, symbolising the aspiration to succeed. They can be collectively called "Shraddha". In the early stages, there could be an apparent distinction between the task and the performer. The Vishnu-Sahasranama says :

इवं स्तवमधीयानः श्रद्धा भक्ति समन्वितौ ।

Deep dedication becomes devotion, Devotion is Bhakti. Natural affection and dedication to a chosen ideal matures into devotion, extreme love - the absorbed state of mind at that stage is Bhakti :

इष्टे स्वारसिको रागः परमाविष्टता भवेत् ।

तन्मयी या भवेत् भक्तिः सात्र रागात्मिका स्मृता ॥

Bhakti is an unceasing search and research of one's true self :

स्वस्वरूपानुसन्धानं भक्तिरित्यभिधीयते ।

Shankaracharya views inner vision as Parabhakti, union as Prajnana and anxiety to attain it as Paramabhakti :

दर्शनं पराभक्तिः स्यात् परज्ञानं तु सङ्गमः ।

पुनर्विश्लेषे भीरुत्वं परमा भक्तिरुच्यते ॥

In his invocatory verse, in the commentary on the Brahma-Sutras, Ramanujacharya prays that knowledge be transformed into intense love :

श्रुतिशरसि विदोमे ब्रह्मणि श्रीनिवासे ।

भवतु मम परस्मिन्मोमुखी भक्तिरुपा ॥

### Music and Devotion

Indian aesthetic traditions hold that music and devotion were inter-woven and interconnected. Tyagarajaswami was willing to forsake the ephemeral heavenly pleasures for the celestial combination of music and devotion.

"Swara Raga Sudha Rasayutabhakti  
Swaragapavargamura"

Knowledge of music, bereft of devotion, is valueless. The cogniscenti, capable of discerning between Nyaya and Anyaya, the right and the wrong, are fully aware that the right path, the Sanmarga is laid open by the fusion of music and devotion :

"Sangita Jnanamu Bhaktivina  
Sanmargamugalade"

Purandaradasa postulated this view much before the above-quoted pronouncement by Tyagaraja. Music sans devotion cannot be tolerated, even vividly seen in Purandaradasa's condemnation by means of the expression "dhambakada koogata" or pompous calls, in his composition, "Kelano Hari Taaleno".

Divinities were not dissociated from music. Tyagarajaswami compiled a comprehensive list of divinities who realised the bliss of music - "Brahmananda Sukhambudi Marma", such as Lakshmi, Gowri, Saraswati, Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva, Nandi etc. Divinities were not mere conossieurs of music, they were practitioners as well:

ब्रह्मा तालधरी हरिश्च पटहि वीणाकरा भारती

वंशजौ शशिभास्करौ श्रुतिधराः सिद्धाप्सरः किन्नरा ।

नन्दी भृगिरिटादिमदलधराः संगीतको नारदः

शम्भोत्तकरस्य संगलतनोर्नोर्व्यं सदा पातु नः ॥

### Doctrine of Divine Grace

The fundamental effort for liberation has to be from the aspirant. Yet, if every effort ended in the exaltation expected, there is nothing supernatural or superhuman. There is something beyond us, which is not one of glorious uncertainty. Realisation does not come merely by discussion, intellect or knowledge. He reveals himself only to a chosen few :

नायमात्मा प्रवचनन लभ्यो न मेधया न बहुना श्रुतेन

यमेवैष विवृणुते तेन लभ्यम् ।

"He illuminates our scriptures and oversees the victory of good over evil.

Celestials congregate to worship his feet" - so says Tyagarajaswami. Muthuswami Dikshitar described Him as the beacon-light atop the tower of his heart, "Matimataam hrudaya gopura deepo." Cardinal Newman prayed, "Lead kindly Light, amidst the encircling gloom." We cannot overlook the Doctrine of Divine Grace and implore Him to show us the right way to sing His glory.

### Single-Mindedness in Devotion

The goal of human aspiration is perfection. Practice continues till perfection is attained, Perfection is not extraneous, it is inherent and latent. Avidya (Ignorance) clouds and envelopes perfection. If ignorance is transcended, the perfection of the Atman manifests itself, like the shining of the sun, when clouds clear away. The function of Sadhana or practice is to remove the enveloping ignorance. There should be single mindedness of purpose in practice, Ekagrachitta. In such a state, the aspirant knows only his goal. Bhakti is a method of honing emotions to perfection.

In Karnatic Music, the Trinity represent the three paths cited earlier. Shyama Shastri, who devoted all his life to the service of Kamakshi, was a Karma-Yogi, Muthuswami Dikshitar, with his impersonal form of reverence was a Jnana-Yogi. Tyagarajaswami was the Bhakta.

The state of single-minded concentration can be perceived well in a composition by Dikshitar in Raga Balahamsa.

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### Credentials of a Devotee

It is quite customary to examine the credentials of a candidate before imparting any knowledge or before empowering him to function. What are a devotee's credentials? He is detached from sensual satisfaction and does not boast of any achievements in Japa or Tapa. Humility is his hall-mark. He realises the lack of reality in material prosperity. He does not expect Divine Grace without striving for it. He does not discriminate between Shiva and Vishnu - "Shiva Madhava bhedamu jeyaraadu". This description is found in a composition by Tyagarajaswami in Raga Begada.

### Forms of Bhakti

Devotional sentiment takes manifold forms. The Bhagavatha Purna enumerates nine major forms :

श्रवणं कीर्तनं विष्णोः स्मरणं पादसेवनम् ।  
अर्चनं वन्दनं दास्यं सख्यमात्मनिवेदनम् ॥  
इति पुंसां पिता विष्णो भक्तिश्चेन्नवलक्षणा ।

These nine forms are :  
(1) *Shravana* - listening to the glory of God, (2) *Kirtana* - singing the praise of God, (3) *Smarana* - *Dhyana* - meditation of God, (4) *Padasevana* - worship of His feet, (5) *Archana* - formal, ritualistic worship, (6) *Vandana* - obeisance, (7) *Dasya* - servitude, (8) *Sakhya* - companionship and (9) *Atma-Nivedana* - self surrender.

Narada adopts an eleven-point classification in his Bhakti-Sutra. Five classifications are identical and two

are similar. The four dissimilar ones are:  
(1) *Vatsalya* - parental affection,  
(2) *Kanta* - love towards a beloved,  
(3) *Parama* - *Viraha* - grief caused by separation and (4) *Tanmayata* - complete absorption.

The Bhagavata classification is functional and Bhakti-Sutra classification emotional.

### Shravana

Audio-effects are pronounced and everlasting. Tiruvalluvar, the Tamil poet, declares that hearing is the most important of all human faculties. Tulsidas expresses the same view :

मधुर वचन ते औषधि कटुक वचन ते तीर ।  
श्रवणद्वार जो संचरे, सालै सकल सरोर ॥

Incessant and repetitive hearing can result in the formation of indelible impressions. This value was well-known to students of political science. Propaganda is best done by repetitive propagation. Goebbel's achievements were by this means. Repetitive listening of the Lord's name or qualities, diverts us from mundane pre-occupation. Saint Garga accords the foremost place to *Shravana*.

कथादिष्वति गर्गः

Rama's story is like nectar and listening thereto is akin to drinking ambrosia. Tyagarajaswami states that listening to Rama's story gives Dharma and breaks the shackles of Karma.



Sadashiva Brahman says that spiritual swans drink the nectar of Rama's story :

शुद्ध परमहंस आश्रम गीतं,  
शुक्ल शौनक कौशिक मुख पीतम् ।

#### Kirtana

Kirtana is the act of speaking or singing the glory of God. The entire life and output of Tyagarajaswami, exemplifies this form. Some compositions which could be cited are "Intakanna Ananda (Bilahari) and "Intasowkhyia" (Kapi) - where he says that there is no greater pleasure than the singing of the Lord's praise.

#### Smarana

Smarana is constant thought, leading to Dhyana, meditation. Even undisturbed thought, for a few fleeting moments, is Smarana. Bhakti is Smarana, is Dhyana. Tyagarajaswami has composed many songs on this aspect :

"Sripate, ni pada chintanam ra"

"Dhyaaname varamaina  
Ganga Sname manasa"

Any number of plunges in holy waters will not remove the stains of deceit and treachery. Meditation will flush them out. Happiness is the constant memory of the Lord's name : "Smarane Sukhamu, O Rama Nama."

A poignant pang in the constant thought of the Lord, is the true criterion of a devotee, according to Narada :

नारदस्तु तदर्पित खिलाचरता  
तद्विस्मरणो परमव्याकुलेति ।

Tradition holds that birth at Srinagara (Tiruvavur) and death at Kashi lead to liberation. Locational advantage, indeed, Yet, there is a place, the thought of which grants liberation. Seshadri Swami quoted this verse often. This place attracted a young lad from the deep South and transformed him by Sadhana and Bhakti to a great sage, Ramana Maharishi. It is here that Shiva appeared as beaconlight on the Kartik-Poornima day. Muthuswami Dikshitar confirms this adage, that mere thought leads to liberation, in a composition dedicated to Lord Shiva of Arunachala, in the Raga Saranga :

स्मरणात् कैवल्यप्रद चरणारविन्दम् ।

#### Mantra

The Bhagavat-Gita holds that amelioration of one's self can only be by means of his own self. The self is one's best friend and worst foe too:

उद्धरेदात्मनादात्मानं नाऽत्मा अवसादयेत् ।  
आत्मवरात्मनो बन्धुः आत्मैव रिपुरात्मनः ।

That which uplifts your mind, your self, is Mantra.

मनसा त्रयार्ति इति मन्त्रः ।

Mantras have great esoteric significance and symbolise synthesis of sound and spiritualism. Mantras are mediums for meditation and repetitive

utterance; they combine Kirtana and Smarana. A Tamilian saint, Tirumangai Azhwar, underwent total transformation on hearing a mantra. We shall now examine a composition, which has for its key, extracts from the Mantra :

सर्व मंगल मांगल्ये शिवे सर्वार्थ साधिके ।  
शरण्ये त्रयंबके गौरी नारायणी नमोस्तुते ॥

The essence of "Trayambake Gowri". The Pallavi starts with and is embellished by words starting with "Tra". The Charana is composed of words starting with "Ma". Since the Pallavi is sung usually after the Charana is rendered, the etymological sequence is "Ma" n "Tra". Each line of the Charana starts with the alphabet Ma in series like Ma, Maa, Mi, Mee, Mu, Moo and so on. The word "Moordhanya" means "foremost". In the Madhyamakala passage of the Charana, the words "Moordhanya" "Shiva Manasantoshini" are dexterously woven in such a way that during rendition, the word "Dhanyashi" will be pronounced, the Raga in which this song was composed.

#### Padasevana

Ruyobroeck says, "where intellect must stay out, love and will may enter in". Sri Ramakrishna says that "Intellect is like a man and love like a woman". A man is led to be a servant of God by the least of longings; not by faultless deductions of dialectics but by the mysterious logic of heart. Love unassisted by the intellect or vice-versa will lead to blind sentimentalism. One can

take the effort, to divine the Truth, only when prompted to do it.

The adoration or seeking refuge of the Lord's feet is a common form of worship in both Buddhism and Hinduism. Literary, historical and monumental evidence bear out the prevalence of the widespread practice of foot-print worship in ancient India.

The well-known Keralite poet, Kulashekara repeatedly stresses this form of worship :

"नाहं वन्दे तव चरणयोः द्वन्द्वमर्दन्द हंतोः

कुम्भीपाकं कुरुमपिहरेः नारकं नापनेतुं ।"

"त्वत्पादाम्बोरुह युगगता निश्चला भक्तिरस्तु ।"

"अवघोरित शारदारविन्दौ चरणौते

मरणेऽपि चिन्तयामि ।"

Padasevana or worship of the Lord's feet, is a mode exemplified by Bharata, in the Ramayana. His adoration and veneration of Rama's sandals, is well-known. Mention must be made of the poet, Vedanta Desika, who composed a thousand-verse epic, "Paduka-Sahasra", on this subject.

The resurrection of Ahalya from her accursed stone-state is a theme over which poets have spent their fancies and is a shining example of Padasevana, this form of Bhakti.

#### Vandana

The fifth form of Bhakti is formal and informal as well. The objects for contemplation, for worship are the feet of the Lord. The feet that defied death. The feet that measured the universe in two strides. The feet that shall be

enshrined in my thoughts. The formality is the paying of obeisance, Vandana. The informality stems from the joy, the affection one has or would feel that worship is to commence. In Karnatic Music, this aspect is well illustrated by songs such as Tyagarajaswami's "Vandanamu Raghunandana". Dikshitar's "Sri Parvati Parameshwarou Vande" and two compositions by Swati Tirunal.

### Archana

Archana is a formal form of devotional propitiation. It means incessant worship. Vyasa defines Bhakti as constant delight in the worship of the Lord :

पूजादिष्वनुराग इति पराशर्यः ।

Purandaradasa says that it is a blessing to secure human birth. "Manava Janma Doddadu". In the Bhagavata-Purana, we find Ambarisha ascribing functions to each limb :

पादौ हरेः क्षेत्रपदानुसर्पणे  
शिरो हृषीकेशपदाभिवन्दने ।  
काम च दास्ये नतु कामकाम्यया  
यथोत्तम श्लोक गुणाश्रया रतिः ।

In a composition in Mukhari Raga, "Induka I Tanavu", Tyagarajaswami says that the body is meant for the Lord's service and not for slavery to desires. Kulasekara deals with a multiplicity of Bhakti forms when assigning limbs to the Lord's service :

जिह्वे कीर्तय केशवं मुररिपुं चेतो भज श्रीधरं  
पाणिद्वन्द्वं समर्चयाच्युतकथां श्रोत्रद्वय त्वं शृणु ।  
कृष्णं लोकय लोचनद्वय हरेर्गच्छाङ्घ्रियुगमालयं  
जिघ्र घ्राण मुकुन्द पादतुलसी मूर्धन्त्रमाधोक्षजम् ॥

Archana encompasses all forms of formal worship, which is well illustrated in the Utsava-Sampradaya Kritis of Purandaradasa, Tyagaraja and Swati Tirunal. The sixteen rituals, Shodasaha-Upachara, are covered by Archana. Archana is a medium to serve and to relish the beauty of His form. Our ancestors accorded the place of pride to this form; which covers all service to the Lord from salutation to slumber.

Flowers were favoured by all religions, Tyagarajaswami equates the Lord's name with flowers - 'Nama Kusuma' is the expression used by him. A famous German poet wrote :

"Sag es mit Blumen, Blumen allien"  
(Say it with flowers and flowers only.)

We can do so if we consider Tyagarajaswami's composition "Tulasidalamulache".

### Dasya

Democratic norms and standards were integral to the Indian ethos. Inscriptions at Uttiramerur highlight the democratic norms practiced by the Cholas. Saketa, the kingdom of Rama, was called a Janapada, a democratic republic. Rama-Rajya was considered

ideal. Democracy relates to equality, liberty and fraternity.

Relationships can be sustained only in a state of equality and spiritual relationships are no exception. The fame of Advaita lies in the equality and identity between the lower self and the higher self. Equality or identity may be the climax - the first step is interdependence.

We can at this stage, dwell on the contents of a Tamil Verse :

"Past, present or future, if you wish to bestow your Grace, it perforce has to be on me, the lower self. While I realise that I subsist on you, it is evident that You also depend on me."

A shloka from the Bhagvata-Purana indicates that the Lord did uphold the views expressed on interdependence, when He said that He does not reside in the orb of the sun, the hearts of ascetics but only where His devotees sing His glory.

नाहं वसामि वैकुण्ठे न योगि हृदय रवौ ।  
मन्त्रका यत्र गायन्ति तत्र तिष्ठामि नारद ॥

Dasya, or servitude, is a form of Bhakti and aptly and sequentially follows the worship of the feet, Padasevana. Hanuman, portrayed always as serving at the feet of the Lord, exemplifies Dasya Bhakti. The Ramayana and the Ramacharitanas commence with tributes to Hanuman :

यत्र यत्र रघुनाथ कीर्तनं  
तत्र तत्र कृतमस्तकाङ्गलि ।  
भाष्पवारि परिपूर्ण लोचनं  
भारुति नमतः राक्षसान्तकम् ॥  
सीताराम गुणग्राम पुण्यारण्य विहारिणौ ।  
वन्दे विशुद्ध विज्ञानौ कवीश्वर कपीश्वरौ ॥

The word "Lakshmana" means in etymological terms, one endowed with Lakshmi, which really means the wealth of service - Kainkarya Lakshmi. Lakshmana's ability to divine even the innermost intentions of Rama and to implement them without formal advice, is the hallmark of his service. Lakshmana served Rama for the sheer delight of enjoying His glance. This diplomatic and intelligent trait is called "Ingita" in Sanskrit. Lakshmana's Ingita is extolled by Valmiki; on completion of the construction of the Parinakutir, perfect to the minutest detail, Rama embraces him and calls him a "Bhavagna", one who understands Ingita.

Interaction is a prelude to identity. Democracy permeated our spiritual life to such an extent that servants were accorded equality, well seen from the fact that Hanuman and Lakshmana are placed on the same pedestal with Rama and Sita and worshipped along with them. Lakshmana's fortune was unique, says Tyagarajaswami, in a composition in Raga Karaharapriya.

### Sakhya

Perhaps the proper sequence in Indian spiritual democracy would be

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liberty, fraternity and equality, Sakhya is a state of fraternity or companionship - a facet duly taken into cognisance in philosophical systems :

त्वमेह माता च पिता त्वमेव,  
त्वमेव बन्धुः सखा त्वमेव ।  
त्वमेह विद्या द्रविणं त्वमेव  
त्वमेह सर्वं मम देव देव ॥

The whole of the Divine-song, Bhagavat-Gita, is devoted to Sakhya. Narayana needed a Nimitta, a medium of expression to expound the Ashtakshari, which was his Sakha - Nara. Krishna needed a companion to expound the Bhagavat-Gita.

पितेव पुत्रस्य सखेव सख्युः ।  
प्रियः प्रियायार्हसि देव सोढुम् ।

Love of the beloved, the best companion, is also Sakhya. The Nayaka-Nayika Bhava is more seen in poetry than in Karnatic music. Andal, a Bhakta and saint cum poetess is well recognised. Yet, her compositions do not enjoy the status that Mirabai's Bhajans have in Hindusthani Music.

In Karnatic Music, Sakhya is best illustrated by compositions of Tyagarajaswami such as "Chelimi Jalajaksha", "Samiki Sari" and "O Rama O Rama" where he uses expressions such as Tyagaraja-Sakhudu and Tyagarajuni-Mitra. He becomes a Nayaki in the composition "Enduku i chalamu" in Shankarabharanam.

Nevertheless, the Kanta-Asakti of Narada can be classified under Sakhya of the Bhagavata system.

### Vatsalya

The Tamil poet, Kamban, provides a delectable verse in his Ramayana, to illustrate Vatsalya, or parental affection. Each calf knows its mother-cow and each cow its calf. A cow amidst several calves will feed only its own. This relationship is not bovine, it is divine. Kamban calls the Lord, "The Mother of the Universe". Devi is described as "Gomati".

Vatsalya can have two forms - a child's love for its parents and love of the child by the parent. In Karnatic Music, examples of a child's love of its parents are found in compositions of Tyagarajaswami and Shyama Shastri. "Maayamma Enine Pilachide" is a shining example, composed by Shyama Shastri.

Tyagaraja beckons his parents, "Sitamma Maayamma, Sri Ramudu Ma Tandri". In a composition in Raga Nabhomani, Tyagaraja wishes to be forgiven in a manner in which a parent forgives an argumentative child:

*"Vadaduchu baalaru yechhati  
vadow nilura buddhi"*

Vernacular-literature from peninsular India, portrays the saint Periazhvar for this form of Bhakti. In Karnatic Music, we have the peerless Purandaradasa; both transformed themselves into Yashoda and their outpourings were in the form of affection showered on the child, Krishna. Several compositions of Purandaradasa are in this vein. Some of the famous compositions are: "Gopiya Bhagyavidu",

"Bare Gopamma", "Gummana Kariyadare", "Amma Nimma Manegalalli", "Pillangoviya Chelva" and the popular-piece "Jagadodharana". Purandaradasa as Yashoda, is proud of the fact that others called her son as a gem amongst children - "Magugala Manikyavena Aadisidale Yashoda". An unsurpassed composition, indeed.

#### Rasabhava :

##### Aesthetic Analysis of Devotion

Bhakti, a feeling of adoration towards God, was considered more important than Bhava. A study of these shows that the nine-forms of Bhakti are related to the nine Bhavas or Rasas. However, Abhinavagupta, a great scholar-devotee of the tenth century, postulated that Bhakti is a primary and accessory sentiment of Shanta Rasa, the foremost of all Rasas. Bhakti leads to peace, tranquility and equanimity. There is no peace without equanimity.

अशान्तस्यः कुतः सुखम् ।

(Bhagavad Gita)

"Shantamulekha Sowkhyamuledu"  
(Tyagaraja)

Bopadeva of Devagiri was a pioneer in analysing the Bhagavata-Purana in a topical manner and in the study of Bhakti and the Navarasas, his well-known works being Bhagvatha-Muktaphala and Hariilila. An emissary carried the tenets of Bopadeva to the Bengali sanyasins of the Gowdya sect. Rupa Goswamin of Bengal consolidated

this subject with his works, Bhaktirasamruta-Sindhu and Ujjvalanilamani. These books help us to visualise the emotional richness of the outpourings of devotees.

A Rasa is the developed, relishable state of a permanent mood and is called Sthayibhava. The development to this state results by interplay of attendant emotional conditions - known as Vibhava, Anubhava, Vyabichari and Sanchari Bhavas. The cause or Kaarana is Vibhava, and is of two kinds : Alambana, the personal or human object and Uddipana, the excitant or catalyst, Anubhavas mean effect or ensuants. Transient or cross-feelings, ancillary to a permanent mood or Sthayi Bhava are Vyabichari and Sanchari Bhavas. Abhinaya stems from Anubhava. Abhinaya means expression. Angika-Abhinaya is expression through the limbs, encompassing dance, drama and pantomime. Vachika-Abhinaya is vocal expression - by speech or song. Sanchari and Vyabichari Bhavas cause "moods". Those of constructive nature, amongst moods, are Sattvika Bhavas.

#### Moods in Bhakti

Unless total mental dissociation is attained, moods shall be there. Total dissociation leads to cessation of activity. Eight Sattvika Bhavas are felt by Bhaktas, in their path to equanimity :

1. *Autsukya* - Impatience
2. *Nirveda* - Despondency
3. *Dainya* - Plaintive plea
4. *Vitarka* - Doubt

5. *Aamarsha* - Anger
6. *Mati* - Clarity of thought
7. *Dhriti* - Contentment
8. *Smriti* - Consciousness

Autsukya, Nirveda and Dainya are moods visible in compositions by Shyama Shastri, who appears to be impatient in getting results, as can be seen by repetitive use of phrases like "Birana Varalichhi", "Samayamide Vegame Vachhi", "Birana Brova" etc. Vitarka can be visualised in songs of Tyagarajaswami such as "E Ramuni Nammitivo" and "Edari Sancharintura". Padams and Javalis apart, Aamarsha can be perceived in popular songs like "Parakunikelara" and "Mari Mari Ninne" by Tyagaraja. Criticism or Ninda-Stuti, a form used by Purandaradasa and Tyagaraja, in Karnatic Music, gets classified under Aamarsha. Songs like "Ninnyako Ninna Hagyo" by Purandaradasa, "Etavuna Nerchitivo" and "Maanam Leda" by Tyagarajaswami are well-known compositions. "Abhimaanamu Ledemi" in Raga Andhaali is a rare Ninda-Stuti composition by Tyagarajaswami. Mati, Dhriti and Smriti dominate the impersonal compositions of Dikshitar. They are the final phases integrating into the Pinnacle of Bhakti, self-surrender or Atma-Nivedana.

#### Atma-Nivedana

Self-surrender is Atma-Nivedana, Sharanaagati. This subject has been dealt with in depth by the Vaishnavas of South India, who appeared to be spiritual

bankers. The example of Ajaamila, a heinous sinner, emerged from the Bhagavata-Purana only to prove Smarana (thought) or Uchharana (utterance) at the time of death as a panacea for all sins. There is no guarantee that thought or speech will survive or remain, at the time of death. Kulashekara says :

प्राणप्रयाण समये कफवार्तापत्ते.

कण्ठावरोधन विधौ स्मरणं कुतः स्ने ।

Purandaradasa says in a similar vein :

"Vaata pittaveredu goodi sleshma bandu

musikidaga

Dhaatu gundidaga Raghunatha

baradayya "

The saint, Periazavar, promoted a forward-deposit scheme, of utterance now in lieu of that-time; "Appodaikku Ippode Solludal".

We did not create ourselves. Give unto Caesar what is Caesars. This self belongs to Him, surrender it. The expression used in the famous Sharanaagati-Shloka in the Ramayana:

तवास्मैतिच याचते अभयं सर्वभूतेभ्यो ददाम

is 'Tavaasmi' meaning "as if it were your own". Vishishtadwaita accepts the expression as such. Realisation, in Adwaita, comes when the "as if" vanishes and it is clear that it is "you". In Shivamaanasa-pooja, Shankaracharya says that the distinction between secular



and sacred activity disappears because every work or task is sacred, as an expression of love to God :

यद्यत्कर्म करोमि तत्तर्खिलं शम्भो तवाराधनम् ।

You place your burdens before Him, He shall carry them for you - the anxiety is His - योगसेमं वहाम्यहं This lovely idea, prominent in Vaishnavism, is the doctrine of the burden "Bhaara-Nyasa", a term which is severely subject to verbicide. The final teaching of the Bhagavat-Gita is complete surrender, is Atma-Nivedana

सर्वधर्मान् परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं व्रज ।

### Epilogue

In the Bhagavata, Suka salutes the Lord as the saviour of several races:

किरातह्णान्धपुलिन्दपुलकसा

आभोरकङ्कायवना खशदयः ।

येऽन्ये च पापा यदुपाश्रयाश्रयाः

शुध्यन्ति तस्मै प्रमर्षिष्णवे नमः ॥

Kiratas, Huns, Andhras, Pulindas, Pulkasas, Aabhiras, Kankas, Yavanas and Khashas are races which He will bestow grace on. In Bhakti, there is no racism. There is no caste or creed. Untouchable saints like Nanda, Kannappa, Ravidas, Chokamela and Triuppanazhwar have graced this land to witness the catholicity of the path of

devotion. There is no sexual discrimination - we venerate Avvayar, Andal, Akkamma Mahadevi and above all, Mirabai. Moral wrecks like Ajamila, Tondaradippodi Azhwar, Vilwamangala and Narayana-Bhatta are shining examples of what the religion of Divine Love can do for redeeming the worst of sinners. Saints like Kabir, Nanak and Tukaram proved that Bhakti does not require bookish knowledge. Amir Ali, a Sufi saint says, *"When a man becomes annihilated from his attributes, he attains perfect subsistence; he has no sign, brand, name or mark."* Saint Paul says : *"Optimum esse unire deo"* (The best to be is one with God.)

Till then, let us strive, seek, find and never yield. Music stirs our souls, elevates us. The mod-version is Soul-Music. In Indian iconography, the instrument Veena is associated with the greatest of the Gurus, Dakshinamoorthi and the Goddess of Music, Saraswati. The Veena is said to have been played by legendary figures like Ravana, Narada, Lava, Kusa et al; the Veena has a place of pride in Karnatic Music. Emotional expression emanates by plucking the strings of a heart - that which is Bhakti. Music and Bhakti interface and integrate. May the sounds of the Veena reverberate in our souls! □



## BHAKTI AND MUSIC

by P. N. Krishnamoorthy

From time immemorial, *Bhakti* or devotion to God has been the cornerstone of the Indian ethos. Thus *Bhakti* has found its way into all aspects of Indian culture and has played a dominant role in Indian philosophy, music, dance, painting, sculpture and literature. Of all these disciplines, music has the greatest power to transport us from the mundane to the spiritual plane and keep our spirit absorbed completely in the spirit's own inner ineffable essence. This truth was realised by our ancients at the very dawn of history. They first extolled the Gods in poetic hymns called 'Riks' and soon realised that the Gods were more easily gratified by the singing of these hymns. Hence the 'Riks' were fitted to tunes and thus the Sama Veda was born.

In both spiritual and temporal terms, the Vedas are the earliest utterances recorded in human history. 'Of the Vedas I am the Sama Veda', says Lord Krishna in Bhagavad Gita, thus giving Sama Veda the primacy of place. Indian music is indeed the voice of Sama Veda. In his 'Natyasastra', Sage Bharatha says that Brahma extracted the art and science of music from the Sama Veda. Hence it can be said that Indian music belongs to the very beginnings of human culture and civilisation.

Of the many Vidyas or esoteric means of realisation taught in the Upanishads, one is called 'Udgitha Vidya' the worship of the 'Udgitha' or

Pranava' or 'Omkaara'. In fact the Chandogya Upanishad says.

"The 'OM' the imperishable 'Udgitha' must be worshipped. . .

"Of all the aspects of creation, the earth is the essence; of earth, the essence is water; of water, the herbs are the essence; man is the essence of herbs. speech is the essence of man; poetry is the essence of speech; music is the essence of poetry; the Udgitha or Pranava is the essence of music. Thus this Udgitha or Omkaara is the utmost, the most valuable final essence of all essences "

Carlyle expresses a similar sentiment in his 'Heroes and Hero Worship'. He says, 'All deep things are song. It seems somehow the very central essence of us, song; as if all the rest of us were but wrappings or hulls'.

Sage Yajnavalkya, the great Smrithi authority says in his 'Smrithi'

"Cleaning your senses, memory, mind and intellect of all objects, the Supreme Atman, which is within oneself, shining like a lamp, should be contemplated upon"

"By intoning the Sama Gana in the proper manner and without break, and by practicing it with concentration, one attains the Supreme Godhead "

"The constant singing of songs verily bestows salvation."

"He who knows the truth of Vina music is an expert in shrutis and their varieties, and understands thals also, reaches the path of salvation without exertion."

Carnatic Music is so saturated with bhakti that all songs are either devotional

or morally didactic. Based on a sloka in Bhagavatam, which is attributed to Prahlada, *bhakti* has been classified into nine forms. The first one is *Sravana* or listening to recitations of the divine qualities of the Lord. The second is *Kirtana* which is singing in praise of the Lord. The third is *Smarana* which is constantly thinking of the Lord and meditating upon Him. The fourth is *Padasevana* or the worship of the Lord's feet. The fifth is *Archana* or the daily worship of the Lord. The sixth is *Vandana* or paying obeisance to the Lord. The seventh is *Kainkarya* or *Dasya* which is serving the Lord as his servant. The eighth is *Atmanivedana* or the abject surrender of one's self to the Lord. The ninth and final form of *bhakti* is *Sakhyam* or devotion to the Lord as a friend.

All these nine forms of *bhakti* have been specifically exemplified in the compositions of Purandara Dasa, Thyagaraja and Swathi Thirunal. In fact almost all compositions in Carnatic Music would fall under one or the other of these nine forms of *bhakti*. Two other forms of *bhakti* which have not been included along with the nine described above, will now be enunciated. One is *Madhura Bhakti*, the form practised by great saints such as Nammalvar, Andal and Mirabai. The other is *Vatsalya Bhakti* which pictures the Lord as a parent (as was done by Syama Sastry and Thyagaraja) or as a child (as was done by Thyagaraja and others).

*Bhakti* has always been reckoned as a means to Mukti. The Bhagavad Gita says that the Jnani attains liberation after numerous births, whereas Thyagaraja is

of the view that a person who has a mind attuned to devotion and who also has knowledge of music is verily a liberated soul in this world itself i.e. a *Jivanmukta*. In his Andolika raga kirtana 'Raga Sudha Rasa' Thyagaraja goes on to say, "the nectar of *Naada Rasa* gives one the blessings of Yaga, Yoga, Tyaga and Bhoga. Drink that raga rasa, O mind and delight". Further in his composition 'Naada Loludai' in Kalyanavasantam, Thyagaraja invites us to attain *Brahmananda* through *Naada Upasana*, which he says is the path followed by the Trimurtis, the Gods and the Sages.

Thus *Bhakti* and Music have been fused into one entity, and *bhakti* through music has been described as the easiest path to salvation. It is not surprising that the great Western composer Beethoven, has said that music is a higher revelation than philosophy. Closer home, Ustad Alauddin Khan one of the greatest figures in Hindustani music, has observed as follows — "When I play, my mind forgets all the realities of the external world and is turned inwards right into my innermost self where God dwells. I play for him only. One lifetime is not enough to master this unlimited art. Musical notes must be so pure and perfect that they should melt your heart and make the tears flow. In spite of a century devoted to the pursuit of music, I have been able to touch such perfect notes only twice or thrice in my life. At such moments, I have experienced a state of mental bliss and sensed a pink brilliance before my mental eyes".

The very sentiments expressed by the Sage Yajnavalkya indeed. □

## RAGA SWAROOPA IN CARNATIC MUSIC

by Narada

Exponents of Carnatic music, especially those of the younger generation, seem to render ragas more as permutations and combinations of permitted swaras.

As a result the whole raga alapana sounds very synthetic, almost as if it had been got together on a badly programmed computer, where the software is lacking in the aesthetics of raga exposition, which is after all, the heart of the matter.

The accent seems to be more on the technology of combining the various permitted swaras rather than on bringing out the jeevan of the raga in question. This is because the accent today is not on the proper delineation of each of the individual swaras in a particular raga with its appropriate anuswaras and gamakas but in ensuring that the swara position (sruthis) are adhered to and that various combinations (or korvais) are rendered irrespective of whether such combinations are in keeping with the real swaroopa of the raga (or) otherwise. For example, one can very often hear junior artists rendering a raga like Kalyani, straying often into Shankarabharanam and vice versa. The reason is that the two ragas differ only in respect of the madhyamam, Kalyani, employing the prathi madhyamam and Shankarabharanam the suddha madhyamam. In spite of the fact that only one swaram is different in these two

ragas, it must be remembered that all the other swaras have also got to be rendered with totally different accents of graces in order to clearly bring out the different swaroopas of the two ragas. This aspect is very often missed out both in training and in saadhana.

Let us imagine that we have suddenly entered a concert in which the raga alapana of Shankarabharanam is in progress. Let us further imagine that the artist is elaborating the portion from middle sthayi panchamam to the upper sthayi gandharam without touching the madhyamam at all. If the artist is truly accomplished and the rasikas well informed, it will be immediately clear to the rasikas that the raga being sung is Shankarabharanam. The same remark would apply to Kalyani. If however this same scenario is imagined when the raga is being played, say on a piano, in view of the fact that only clean notes without gamakas can be rendered on this instrument, it would probably not be easy to distinguish which of the two ragas is being played. However it is well known that even on the harmonium which is supposed to be an instrument on which it is difficult to bring out gamakas, there are expert exponents who can bring out the distinction between Kalyani and Shankarabharanam without as much as touching the madhyama swara

One can very well imagine the state

of the art when the violin was introduced into Carnatic music. The fingering and bowing techniques peculiar to the genius of Carnatic music could have only been developed gradually and one can imagine that the music would have been rather *suddha swara*-oriented and graceless in the early phases of the use of the instrument in Carnatic music. Even in respect of the flute, the situation was not very different about fifty years ago. In a recent article on the late T.R. Mahalingam, N. Krishnaswamy says how prior to Mali, "the flute was played like a harmonium with discontinuous notes till Mali came on the scene." The writer goes on to say that Mali introduced graces (*gamakas*), innovative fingering techniques, slow tempo playing and lent long glides from the lower to the higher octave. He made the seemingly impossible sustained notes (*karvais*) seem like child's play".

One has no doubt that great exponents of the violin like Thirukkodikaval Krishna Iyer introduced similar innovations in the technique of violin playing because they were extremely well informed of the intricacies and nuances of Carnatic music. One could pay a similar tribute to A.K.C. Natarajan for his effective adaptation of the clarinet to the exacting requirement of Carnatic music. The same remark would apply to U. Srinivas who has exercised a touch of sheer genius in adapting the mandolin for Carnatic music. Kadri Gopalnath is gradually succeeding in doing the same in respect of the saxophone.

Once I had the privilege of listening to veena maestro Sangeeta Kalanidhi K.S. Narayanaswamy, addressing his students, fellow teachers and admirers at the Shanmukhananda Mini Auditorium.

Strangely enough, the principal subject dealt with in the lecture was the unique characteristics of *raga swarupa* in Carnatic music. K. S. Narayanaswamy made the point that compositions in Carnatic music, which are necessarily vocalised at the time of their creation, principally provide the *lakshya* aspects for ragas in Carnatic music. He went on to say that the instrumental *vaadya* renderings provide *lakshana* aspects. He also stressed the point that after all is said and done, Carnatic music was basically founded on the "Gayaki ang" or the vocal aspect. He went on to point out that the octave was divided into two halves, the first one spanning the four notes from lower *shadjamam* to the *madhyamam* called *poorvangam* and the second half spanning the four notes from *panchamam* to the upper *shadjamam* called *uttarangam*.

Generally when a *raga* is a *sampoorna raga* (i.e., having all the seven notes in the octave) and where the *poorvangam* and the *uttarangam* have a basic symmetry when sung in two groups of four notes from *shadjamam* to *madhyamam* and *panchamam* to upper *shadjamam*, the *raga* assumes enormous power, sophistication and expanse in so far as potential for duration of the delineation of the *raga* is concerned. This would not necessarily

imply that ragas, which lack such symmetry, would not qualify to be classified as ragas, which lend themselves to expansive exposition. Two instances that readily come to my mind are *Kambhoji* and *Bhairavi*.

K.S.N. went on to explain how the *nyasa swara* or the ending *swara* in each passage of groups of *swaras* which are employed in *raga alapana*, *swaraprasthara*, *sangathis* or *niraval* play an important role in the delineation of ragas in the correct, traditional manner. He gave a number of finely etched examples of *nyasa swaras* from *Shankarabharanam* and *Kalyani*, *Thodi* and *Dhanyasi*, *Kedaragaula* and *Suruti* etc., to bring home this point. In addition he referred to certain pairs of closely connected ragas such as *Shankarabharanam* and *Kalyani*, *Thodi* and *Dhanyasi* and *Kedaragaula* and *Suruti* in which, even in areas where the *swaras* in the two ragas are identical in terms of *swara* positions, the accents employed in rendering them, coupled with the appropriate *nyasa swaras*, succeed in bringing out very distinctly, the differences between the members of each pair.

In passing he made a very interesting remark about the *raga Varali*. He opined that *Varali* was one of the most beautiful ragas in Carnatic music. Referring to the traditional taboo by which this *raga* is not supposed to be directly taught by the teacher to the students, he felt that probably the reason for the taboo is the fact that the *raga* is so beautiful that it should be heard and

absorbed by the student from his *Guru* and from other great musicians so that the student could, later on, do a highly individualised rendering of the *raga* that is his own. While listening to this remark I could not but feel that today's mechanised methods of teaching Carnatic music would not have brought Carnatic music to such a pass, if the taboo applicable to *Varali* could have been made applicable to all ragas in Carnatic music. In short the point I am making is that Carnatic music is an art like painting, which should indeed be taught, but in which the artists cannot take up a famous painting and paint a replica. A true artist, even though he may be painting the same scene, which has already been painted by another artist, should still be able to bring to bear, a reflection of his own individualistic genius in his painting. The same rule would apply to all aspects of Carnatic music, whether it be the delineation of a *krithi*, the rendering of a *raga*, the singing of *kalpanaswara* or *niraval* or for that matter any other aspect.

How does a *raga* evolve with all its *lakshya* based glory in Carnatic music? When one looks at ragas such as *Karaharapriya*, *Harikambhoji* and *Atana*, which have existed from the days of *Tevarams* and generally '*Pannisai*', one finds that they have broadly survived with their original aesthetic characteristics still intact, notwithstanding the fact that today the *lakshana* aspect of Carnatic music tends to classify them and give them *arohanam* and *avarohanam* definitions.

There are padams and javalis in ragas such as Atana in which there are certain off beat prayogams, which are normally not brought into either raga elaboration or composition in those ragas.

In a similar manner, the raga Kambhoji used to be rendered with a slightly different lakshana format a few decades ago. It used to be characterised as a nadaswaram version of this raga.

Similarly, many ragas have apoorva prayogams such as the use of kakali nishadam in the phrase 'Sa Ni Pa Da Sa' in Kambhoji and the well known variations in ragas such as Anandabhairavi, Kaanada etc. In Sriragam the avarohanam consists of notes 'Sa Ni Pa Ma Ri Ga Ri Sa'. However in some compositions, the notes 'Sa Ni Pa Da Ni Pa Ma Ri Ga Ri Sa' occurs in the avarohanam. All these minor variations, some of them occasionally controversial, add spice to the delineation of Carnatic music.

#### Codification of ragas

The codification of ragas into 72 melakartha ragas (or sampoorna ragas, i.e. ragas with all the seven notes in the arohanam and avarohanam) and further codification of janya ragas has expanded the scope of Carnatic music enormously. However, it is important to remember that quite a number of both melakartha ragas and janya ragas had existed prior to the codification in the melakartha system and hence it must be realised that these ragas have had their lakshyas bestowed on them long before the formalisation

process of the melakartha system took root in Carnatic music.

#### Transformation of ragas

It is true that certain ragas have undergone transformations during the past fifty or hundred years. Some examples are Kaanada, which today is rarely sung without a mixture of Darbari and Kapi which again is performed only on rare occasions as a pure Carnatic raga without intrusions from Hindustani system. All these finely honed changes are for the ultimate good of Carnatic music; for only what is pleasurable to the intellect, emotions and aesthetics, will survive on a long term basis. Other changes of a purely temporary nature which may sound pleasing at present, will not survive the test of time.

#### Varisais and Alankarams

This having been said, one can ask oneself how raga swaroopa has come to pass in Carnatic music. All those well versed in Carnatic music will readily recognise that the swaroopa of a raga can never be clearly understood from the arohanam and avarohanam of that raga. The raga has to be given a characteristic flavour by a great vaggeyakara (composer) through the medium of one or more compositions in that raga. Let us take for example the raga Mayamalavagoula.

It is a raga by which the teaching of Carnatic music is initiated through varisais and alankarams. Does the swaroopa of the raga emerge in these varisais and alankarams? The answer

is no. This is because in the initial stages of Carnatic music training, the accent is or at least should be on the purity of each individual note, with a minimal role being played by gamakas and other nuances. The swaroopa of Mayamalavagoula can never emerge under these circumstances.

However, when one looks at compositions, such as 'Thulasidala' and 'Merusamana' of Thyagaraja or 'Deva

Deva' of Swathi Thirunal, one is immediately able to get a complete picture of the basic outline of this raga. Such a remark would equally apply to the very first composition of Muthuswamy Dikshitar 'Sri Naadhadi'. In fact, the very first line of this composition gives a complete idea of the musical identity of this raga. □

*Courtesy : Economic Times*

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## **THE SITAR AND AMIR KHUSRAO** by Dr. (Mrs.) Lovely Sharma\*

The treasure of knowledge that Indian Classical Music is, was once upon a time a monopoly of a few, mostly illiterate Ustads who earned their living through it. Today several steps are being taken for the uplift of this ancient Indian art. Indeed, many Indian Universities have established well equipped research centers to unravel the secrets and hitherto unknown facts of this fascinating subject and to widen its horizons.

Sitar in more recent times has come to enjoy the status of a Queen of all instruments, a position once enjoyed only by the Veena. This Indian lute is perhaps the most developed musical instrument of the world today. Many musicologists, Indians and foreigners, have been interested in its evolution and as a result of this we have many theories about its origin today. On the basis of various historical facts and their analysis, this article throws light on its relation with the name 'Khusrao'.

The most widespread theory of the Sitar's evolution is that it was developed by Amir Khusrao, the famous musician of Allaudin Khilji's court in Delhi in the late 13th to early 14th century. According to different versions, it was either invented by Amir Khusrao or made on the model of some type of veena and was given the

name 'Seh-tar' by him, meaning three strings in the Persian language

According to this theory, Amir Khusrao removed the metal frets of the Been (or Veena) which could not be moved as they were fixed by wax. He attached the silken strings as the thin gut to the frets and tied them at the back of the Sitar's neck so that the player could slide them up and down. But the historically traced and proven fact is that during the regime of Raghunath Nayak of Tanjavur (1614 - 1623), a musicologist by the name Govinda Dikshitar fixed the frets of the veena, so that all the ragas could be played. Before this the frets on the veena were movable and their number varied. Still earlier the veena had finger board without frets. All this clearly indicate that at the time of Amir Khusrao, the veena had no fixed frets. Moreover the name of Sitar had not appeared in any of Amir Khusrao's own writings or for that matter in any other writing of his time or later. Thus based on these, the above claims can easily be disproved.

Since Khusrao's name has been mentioned by the 19th century musicologists such as Captain Williard (who stayed for quite sometime with Nawab Ali Bahadur of Banda and studied the practical art of that time) and Mohammad Akram Imam Khan,

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researchers in the last two decades began to think as to how his name got attached with the Sitar. Based on this they floated a theory that Khusrao Khan of the 18th century, who was the brother of the famous Niamat Khan 'Adarang' invented or developed the Sitar and his name was by mistake being confused with Amir Khusrao of the 14th century. To prove this claim some oral evidences have been put forward. The only written evidence cited by these scholars is a book titled '*Purani Delhi Ki Halat*' published in 1949, an Urdu translation by Khwaja Hassan Niami of a book entitled '*Mirate Dehli*' written by D.Q.Khan. The book did not mention the name of Niamat Khan's brother. The comments on Niamat Khan's brother's musical ability do not indicate, about his having made a new instrument '*Seh-tar*' but mention that he originated a new style of playing it. The following is an account of what appears in '*Mirate Dehli*':....

"Niamat Khan was a Been player and even Niamat's brother used to play it for four hours. He was such an expert in playing '*Seh-tar*' that he invented a new style of playing it. Musical embellishments which could be played only on big string instruments could be played in a much better way by him on his '*Seh-tar*'. This was a great wonder of the world. I am very lucky that I could get his company. Sometimes I used to stay with him, the whole night. He was never against this and when he sang on '*Seh-tar*', it used to be heart touching -

This book gives an account of Delhi from 1718 to 1739. It had

mentioned Niamat Khan as 'Adarang' but despite giving a list of all the musicians of those times, nothing is mentioned about 'Sadarang', though it is well known that 'Adarang' and 'Sadarang' lived together outside the Delhi Court and have composed many Khayals after their confrontation with King Mohammad Shah. This and the fact that 'Adarang' and 'Sadarang' were the two brothers at Mohammad Shah's court (also supported by Mohammad Akram Imam Khan in his 19th century book) points out that Niamat Khan's brother mentioned in '*Mirate Dehli*' is no one but 'Sadarang'. 'Sadarang' is historically traced as the famous Firoz Khan who made the first Baaj of playing Sitar known after his name as Firoz Khani Baaj.

The above scholars who claim that Khusrao Khan was the brother of Niamat Khan and Firoz Khan was Khusrao Khan's son, should note that they are placing Firoz Khan much later in the 18th century. His and Masit Khan's age consideration also shows that both Firoz Khan and Niamat Khan have to be of a similar age. Moreover written accounts of 19th century indicate that both are brothers. There is also no information from any other source about the musical abilities of the above said Khusrao Khan. And the fact that D.Q. Khan has not mentioned the name of Niamat Khan's brother only proves that he should have been quite famous and capable of identification as Niamat Khan's brother.

It is interesting to note that before Captain Williard (1834), a rare Persian manuscript '*Nagmatul Azaib*' also associates the Sitar with Khusrao. Fortunately, the author had made a line drawing of this Sitar towards the end of the book. It is depicted as a single-bowled, three stringed instrument, with no gourd and no frets.

This is almost the instrument described as Persian Sitar by Captain C. R. Day in 1891 and depicted picturesquely by him through a colour drawing. October and November 1910 and January 1911 issues of Music Gazette of India gives a drawing of Sitar and also a description about it. The Sitar is shown with an in-built bowl, without gourd and with frets. The number of strings vary from 3 to 5, the main strings however remaining three. In C. R. Day's and Arhamuddin's drawing there are no frets. Mohammad Akram Imam Khan also writes about a Sada Sitar of his days (post 1857). He says "It had imbibed some of the characteristics of Been, but prefers to rely on its own three strings and of these, one is of steel and the remaining two are of brass....". He talks about the main Sitar as '*Ekahri tumbi wala*' which had six strings during his time.

The instrument is found in the classical Persian literature. It is also

evidenced that this has been the instrument par excellence in the hands of Barbad, the immortal court minstrel of Khusrao Par Waz (580 - 629 A.D). The usual visual shows Barbad, the vocalist plays on his Satay/ Sitar and sings, while his inveterate rival Nakisa keeps company on Chang. This is so coincidental with what Amir Khusrao has to say about himself and Ustad Mohammad Shah Changi. The only difference is that being a self trained Indian of his times, there is no mention of him having played any instrument while singing. This has led to the popular saying of associating the Sitar with Amir Khusrao in the 19th century.

Development of this Persian Sitar in Egypt and some Arab countries has led to the emergence of the Tambur which came to India around the 13th century. All further evidences indicate that today's Sitar is nothing but a later development of this Tambur, so as to incorporate the playing of the Been techniques on this instrument.

To conclude, I must say that the Sitar is basically a Persian lute having become popular mainly because of the developments by which Indian Music can be played on it effectively. It will be proper to say that it is an instrument which has a foreign body, but the soul is purely Indian. □



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## REJUVENATION OF THE VEENA AS A CONCERT INSTRUMENT - SOME SOLUTIONS

by Mangalam Muthuswamy

There was a time when the Veena was held in great esteem and was highly popular as a concert instrument. The names of Venkatramana Das and Sambasiva Iyer have been indelibly linked to the veena. They had raised it to unprecedented heights with their mastery over the instrument and several others had continued to contribute to its popularity over the decades. But sadly, one finds that the veena no longer enjoys the same popularity and has all but disappeared from the concert scenario and the number of competent *vainikas* has dwindled drastically.

What ails the veena/ *vainikas*? Why this state of affairs? Who is responsible? Is it the fault of the organisers, the audience, or the exponents, or is it merely the ravages of changing times? All these questions need to be examined before one can embark on an action plan to rejuvenate the veena to its rightful place in the concert scenario.

One reason is the paucity of talented performers. Moreover, the *vainika bani* which is more prevalent these days is flat, with an abundance of *meetu* (plucking) and consequent loss of *sahitya bhava*, which is not pleasing to the listener. The *gayaki bani* on the other hand is replete with melody and akin to vocal music with its stress on *sahitya bhava* and hence enchants the

*rasika*. But there are not many takers for this *bani* as it entails a lot of hard work. There are few teachers who propagate this style and fewer students who have the time or interest to devote themselves to the demanding training/practice required.

It is deceptively easy to learn to handle the veena in the initial stages, unlike other instruments. Difficulties arise when a student completes the *madhyamakala varnas* and proceeds to advanced lessons. Whereas at this stage it becomes easier to handle other instruments like the violin, it is just the opposite with the veena. The present day students who have to contend with the competitive environment in their regular curriculum or in their jobs, do not have the necessary time even if they have the inclination, for subjecting themselves to the regimen of training and practice without which they cannot gain competence. Hence there are many who drop out once the initial euphoria fades.

The lack of opportunities to perform is another reason why there are not many takers for the veena. As in any other performing art, in the case of the veena also not many take it up for the sheer love of the art as in the past. Everyone's goal is to perform and acquire instant fame without the requisite

hard work. As competency dwindles, so too the opportunities to perform and audience attendance.

The foremost necessity in order to surmount these problems and rejuvenate the veena is to appoint competent teachers to the faculty of music institutions. The sole criterion for appointing teachers should be merit and not influence/expediency. There are still enough talented *vainikas* who are excellent teachers, languishing in obscurity. These should be identified and given the opportunity to perform and teach. This would ensure the creation of a whole new generation of proficient veena exponents. Those students who show promise should be encouraged to perform in short duration concerts such as composers' day celebrations etc., beside being awarded scholarships and selected for workshops under maestros etc.

In this respect, I am happy to say that the Shanmukhananda Sangeetha Vidyalaya run by the Shanmukhananda Sabha (of which I am faculty member) has been on the forefront. Several students, including my own have received scholarships and opportunities to perform on *vaggeyakara* day celebrations.

The student should be taught not only to play the veena but other aspects such as handling and maintenance of the instrument. Lack of knowledge in this direction often results in the deterioration of the *naadam*, which again negates listening pleasure. Capacity to sing (regardless of recalcitrant voice or the

like) is a necessary prerequisite in order to excel in bringing out the subtle nuances of the *bhava*. A serious student should, after mastering the technique, venture to rise above the set pattern and develop his/her own style. Like a bee gathering sweet nectar from different flowers, he/she should take the best from the maestros and applying one's inherent originality, create an individualistic style. The veena is a unique instrument capable of reproducing faithfully anything musical - it is the player's mastery or lack of it that decides whether the output is exquisite melody or mere metallic twang. It is the one instruments that is akin to a guru and imparts *swara gnyana* to the player.

The sabhas can play a vital role in propagating the veena. But in practice there is perhaps one veena concert or rarely two organised during a year. Generally the excuse one hears is the lack of audience. While to some extent it may be true, the fact remains that there is little patronage from the sabhas for the veena. They can also experiment with having the veena as an accompanying instrument for vocal concerts (instead of the violin), thereby creating more awareness and opportunities for popularising the instrument.

One of the reasons for dwindling audiences is the lack of sophisticated acoustics that can bring out every subtle nuance and *gamaka* so that it reaches every individual present in the auditorium. The sound systems that are

*Continued on page 41*

## MUSIC APPRECIATION - 1

by Dr. (Smt.) Geetha Ravikumar

*Starting with this issue, Dr. (Smt.) Geetha Ravikumar will present a series of articles on Music Appreciation. This will cover both the styles of Indian music viz. Carnatic and Hindustani. A versatile musician / musicologist, Dr. (Smt.) Geetha Ravikumar adept in handling both the forms of music is a research scholar cum performer and has won acclaim for her proficiency in maintaining the identity of each system intact*

Music is an integral part of India's culture. Our classical music systems the Carnatic and the Hindustani have evolved from the same origin. Naturally, the basic concepts and principles seem very similar, yet we do recognize the two distinct styles and do experience apparent differences in their presentations.

Indian music is a typical example of modal music i.e. based on modes. The individuality of a mode is established by notes of defined frequencies in its structure. It is not the inter-relationship between the notes that establishes the raga, although this inter - relationship is there but the relationship of each note is to the basic tonic note. This tonic note may be actually heard through a drone or even in its absence, a trained ear is able to recognize a raga, bearing in mind the presumed tonic note.

Why should anyone care to learn to appreciate the indigenous music of India? To ask such a question is like asking, why study music at all? When there is music in every country and musicians are everywhere, such a

question would be regarded silly. Primitive man first learnt to express in song his feelings about joy, sorrow and religion.

The best music of any country is a cultural heritage which should be appreciated and enjoyed by the intelligent people of all lands and especially by those of the land where the music is evolved. Indians should not only be proud of this heritage and preserve it, but should also themselves increasingly learn to appreciate it.

It has been well known that music is closely related to emotions, and that it is the emotions which most powerfully influence and determine human behavior.

Why do not more people enjoy India's best music? Why is it that many educated Indians and to a greater extent Westerners, do not seem to appreciate India's music to the same extent that they appreciate other forms of her art and culture? Is it because the eye is actually more important than the ear?

In my view this lack of appreciation is mainly due to three radical defects



- (i) A prejudice based upon insufficient knowledge.
- (ii) A lack of opportunity to acquire that knowledge, or
- (iii) A failure to take advantage of such opportunities as they arise.

To appreciate music the listener needs not know the definition of music. A knowledge of science is desirable in that, it helps him or her to substantiate his or her conclusions. However, it is not a must, because music and human psyche are so inter-related that the mind involuntarily responds to music like a plant to sunlight.

The melody element in music catches the listener's attention first. It is a happy combination of emotion and pleasant notes stemming from the heart of the artist and beseeching the listener to follow a harmonious blend of rhythm, timbre text, devotion and so on.

To appreciate music one should have music in oneself. "The Sangita Ratnakara" says "A Rasika is one who values music merely for the enjoyment of it" Babies, animals and even plants react to music. Surely rasikas should aspire to be something better, to be knowledgeable in their appreciation, to be able to discern the nuances in a concert and to differentiate the chaff from the wheat.

The Raga System is a unique feature of Indian music. It is more systematized in Carnatic music than in the Hindustani style of the North. This will be dealt later in this series based on various terminologies, forms of musical compositions, styles of presentation,

concert patterns and systems differentiating both the North and South Indian Music systems. We can say that a raga has a definite form and possesses *ranjakatva*. However music is not only *Atmaranjan*, but also *Manoranjan*. All presentations which misinterpret Raga Sangeet, will be inappropriate. Further Raga Music is a highly developed art with a fine scientific base. The role of the classical art is to bring the common man to the level of understanding the Raga music. The art displayed inspires a layman to take the trouble to learn, understand and appreciate Raga music. An artist must treat the rasika (listener) with warmth. As a listener, one should have permanent interest and also develop interest to know and learn more about music in general.

To appreciate good music, first of all, a rasika must develop a good ear too. He or she must make it a point to attend some good concerts, either vocal or instrumental. A rasika must also attend some lecture-demonstrations in music or a music appreciation course. By continuously hearing good music one can develop better knowledge, judgment of raga, tala and svara. In the long run, he or she will try to appreciate good music and can also become a good music critic in future.

Music appreciation does not necessarily mean that a listener or a Rasika must undergo serious training in music and also know the Sangeeta Shastra very well. However he or she must develop an intuition or sincere and cultivated interest. One must also listen

to the radio, the T.V., audio-cassettes and C.D.'s etc. Music appreciation courses conducted by the musicians and by musician - musicologists through Seminars, Workshops, and lecture-demonstration programmes will help a layman listener to improve his quality of music appreciation.

A listener or a Rasika must also know to appreciate music in a proper manner. We find in some concerts rasikas or listeners applauding even before the conclusion, so no one probably, not even the musician, knows whether he or she has concluded correctly. Such an appreciation cannot encourage the musician as he knows

that it is done by listeners without knowledge of music.

To the more serious of rasikas, I will suggest intense listening if not learning. It would be a rewarding experience. The rasikas should know their appreciation not for gymnastics or acrobatics but only for the musical excellence of the performer.

The listener on his part should have the desire to learn and one should listen intently with rapt attention. It is good to encourage musicians, but the appreciation must be discriminating and spontaneous. □

(To be continued...)

## Rejuvenation of the Veena

### Continued From Page 38

normally available are inadequate while contact mikes are tolerated for lack of anything better. I have seen the difference made by powerful, sophisticated mikes in my performances abroad and on the basis of that experience earnestly request the sabha organisers to pay special attention to this while featuring a veena recital - the result can be observed in increased attendance of the *rasikas* who would now be able to enjoy the full melody of this divine instrument. The wondrous strains of the veena would be as uplifting as meditation.

The exponents too have a responsibility to their audience. They

should sing a few lines of the *sahitya* to acquaint the rasika of any new composition played so that his/her interest is sustained. The *vainika's* attitude also matters a great deal - one has to dedicate oneself totally to the music as homage to Saraswati, the goddess of veena and regard each performance as an offering to *Nadabrahma* immersing oneself in the *sahitya bhava* of each composition presented, to increase the tribe of *rasikas* and votaries for the veena

To sum up, if there are no good teachers there would be no exponents, and if there are no platforms there would be no veena itself. □

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## OBITUARY

### SHRI. T. S. BALAKRISHNA SASTRIGAL

The passing away of Shri T. S. Balakrishna Sastrigal recently, will prove to be an irreparable loss to the field of 'Harikatha'. Born in 1918, TSB, right from an early age displayed his versatility by mastering languages such as Tamil, Telugu, Sanskrit and Kannada. He also acquired great mastery in music under the tutelage of Tiger Varadachariar and Mudicondan Sabapathy Iyer.

Through his active life in this field, he entranced audiences with his multilingual mastery, his mellifluous and bhava laden music (in which he was ably assisted by his brother T. Vallisan who lent him musical vocal support) and with his ability to quote chapter and verse from Indian Mythology and the Vedas. He proved to be an able



This synergistic combination of expertise in various fields led to his becoming a master Harikatha exponent. He could also render Harikathas most effectively through the medium of English. He delved deep into the Itihasas and Puranas, and in spite of his being employed in the then Imperial Bank of India, very early in his life he

garnered a reputation for being a master Harikatha exponent. Throughout his active life in this field, he entranced audiences with his multilingual mastery, his mellifluous and bhava laden music (in which he was ably assisted by his brother T. Vallisan who lent him musical vocal support) and with his ability to quote chapter and verse from Indian Mythology and the Vedas. He proved to be an able successor to Mangudi Chidambara Bhagavathar, who, in his day was an unparalleled Harikatha exponent. He was the recipient of many well deserved honours and awards which included the "Sri Kathamritha Kalanidhi" and "Bharata Kesari" by the Sankaracharya of Kanchi

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## SRI SHANMUKHANANDA FINE ARTS & SANGEETHA SABHA (REGD.)

### Music Competition 2002 - 2003 - List of Prize Winners

Sr.No.	Title of Endowment / Memorial	Prize Winners
<b>CARNATIC VOCAL :</b>		
1.	<b>Sri. B.V.S. Iyengar Memorial</b> (Instituted by M/s. Iyengar & Co.) (Age 10-15 yrs)	<p>1<sup>st</sup> Prize : { a) Kum. Sanjana Raman b) Mast. Abhijit Babu</p> <p>2<sup>nd</sup> Prize : { a) Kum. S. Janani b) Kum. Shweta Jayshankar</p> <p>3<sup>rd</sup> Prize : { a) Kum. B.N. Chinmayee b) Kum. Aparna Sundararaman</p>
2.	<b>Smt. Dharmambal Subramanian Endowment</b> (Instituted by Smt. Pasupati) (Age 10-12yrs)	<p>1<sup>st</sup> Prize : Kum. Sanjana Raman</p> <p>2<sup>nd</sup> Prize : Mast. Abhijit Babu</p> <p>3<sup>rd</sup> Prize : { a) Kum. Abhirami Shankar b) Kum. Krithika Subramanian</p>
3.	<b>Smt. Neelambal Jagadeesan Memorial :</b> 'Dasarnama' (Age 10-15 yrs)	<p>1<sup>st</sup> Prize : Kum. S. Janani</p> <p>2<sup>nd</sup> Prize : Kum. Girija Swaminathan</p> <p>3<sup>rd</sup> Prize : Kum. Abhirami Shankar</p>
4.	<b>Smt. Lakshmi Gopalkrishna Memorial :</b> [5 Silver lamps] (Instituted by Sri R. Gopalkrishna - "RGK") (Age 10-15 yrs)	<p>5 Prizes : { a) Kum. Aparna Sundararaman b) Mast. Vivek Thyagarajan c) Mast. Vignesh Ishwar d) Mast. Abhijit Babu e) Mast. Karthik Suresh</p>
5.	<b>i) Smt. Vijayalakshmi Nathan Endowment :</b> (Instituted by Sri. R. S. Nathan)	<p>1<sup>st</sup> Prize : Kum. Savitha Viswanathan</p> <p>2<sup>nd</sup> Prize : Mast. Anujan Krishnamurthy</p>

Sr. No.	Title of Endowment / Memorial	Prize Winners
<b>CARNATIC VOCAL (Contd.) :</b>		
5.	ii) Smt. N. Lakshmi Endowment (Instituted by Smt. N. Lakshmi) iii) Smt. Kalyani Rajamani Endowment (Instituted by Sri. Rajamani) (Age 15-28 yrs)	
6.	ij) Kalki Memorial (Instituted by Sri. T. Sadashivan) ii) Smt. Narayani Haridasan Memorial (Instituted by Sri. H. Shankar) (Age 10-16 yrs)	1 <sup>st</sup> Prize : Mast. Karthik Suresh 2 <sup>nd</sup> Prize : { a) Kum. B. N. Chinmayee b) Mast. Vignesh Ishwar 3 <sup>rd</sup> Prize : { a) Kum. Sanjana Raman b) Mast. Anujan Krishnamurthy Consolation : Kum. Jyotsna Shivkumar
7.	ij) Karugudi Sri. V. Sankara Iyer Memorial : (Instituted by Sankar Iyer & Co.) ii) Sri. K. Gopalachari Memorial (Instituted by Sri. S. K. Iyengar) (Age 16-28 yrs)	1 <sup>st</sup> Prize : Kum. Sheetal. R. 2 <sup>nd</sup> Prize : Kum. Radhika Sharma
8.	Sri. R. V. Murthi Endowment (Instituted by Sri. R. V. Murthy) (Age 16-28 yrs)	1 <sup>st</sup> Prize : Mast. V. Balasundar 2 <sup>nd</sup> Prize : { a) Kum. Saritha Sundar b) Smt. Jisha Shyamkishore
9.	Smt. D. K. Pattammal Endowment (Instituted by Sri. V. V. Srivatsa) (Pancharatna Krithis), (Age 16-28 yrs)	1 <sup>st</sup> Prize : Kum. Rohini Dharmarajan
10.	ij) Sri. S. R. Kasturi Endowment (Instituted by S. R. Kasturi)	1 <sup>st</sup> Prize : Kum. Sheetal. R. 2 <sup>nd</sup> Prize : Kum. Savitha Viswanathan

Sr. No.	Title of Endowment / Memorial	Prize Winners
<b>CARNATIC VOCAL (Contd.) :</b>		
10.	ii) Sri. P.R. Krishnaswamy Memorial (Instituted by Sri. S. K. Iyengar) iii) Sri. Maharajapuram Santhanam Endowment (Instituted by Sri Maharajapuram Viswanatha Iyer Trust for Tyagaraja Krithis) (Age 16-28 yrs)	
11.	Smt. Karuganti Satyavathi Memorial (Instituted by Sri. Hanumantha Rao) (Age 16-28 yrs)	1 <sup>st</sup> Prize : Kum. Savitha Viswanathan 2 <sup>nd</sup> Prize : Kum. Poornima Krishnan
12.	Smt. D. K. Pattammal Endowment (Instituted by Dr. V. V. Srivatsa for Muthiah Bhagavathar Krithis) (Age 16-28 yrs)	1 <sup>st</sup> Prize : Smt. Vijayalakshmi Rangarajan 2 <sup>nd</sup> Prize : Kum. Savitha Viswanathan 3 <sup>rd</sup> Prize : Kum. Uma Shankar Consolation : Smt. Jisha Shyam Kishore
13.	Smt. D. K. Pattammal Endowment (Instituted by Dr. V. V. Srivatsa for Muthuswamy Dikshitar Krithis) (Age 16-28 yrs)	1 <sup>st</sup> Prize : Kum. Savitha Viswanathan 2 <sup>nd</sup> Prize : Kum. Radhika Sharma
14.	ij) Maharajapuram Sri. Viswanatha Iyer Memorial (Instituted by Sri Maharajapuram Viswanatha Iyer Trust) ii) "Karachi" Rajagopalan Memorial (Instituted by Smt. Lakshmi Rajagopalan for Alapana) (Age 16-28 yrs)	1st Prize : Kum. Savitha Viswanathan 2nd Prize : Kum. Rohini Dharmarajan 3rd Prize : Mast. Ashwin Krishnamurthy



Sr. No.	Title of Endowment / Memorial	Prize Winners
<b>CARNATIC VOCAL (Contd.) :</b>		
15.	<b>Sri. P. R. Krishnaswamy Iyer Memorial :</b> <b>Award</b> (Instituted by Smt. Anuradha Badri) (Silver Lamp Prize) (Age 16-30 yrs)	1 <sup>st</sup> Prize :  Kum. Sheetal. R.
16.	<b>Sri. Navalpakkam Sunder Rajan Endowment :</b> (Instituted by Sri. N. Sunder Rajan for Shyama Sastri Kithis) (Age 16-28 yrs)	1 <sup>st</sup> Prize : 2 <sup>nd</sup> Prize : Kum. Sheetal. R. Kum. Poornima Krishnan
<b>VIOLIN</b>		
17.	<b>Smt. Dharmambal Subramanian Endowment :</b> (Instituted by Smt. Pasupathi) (Age 10-12 yrs)	1 <sup>st</sup> Prize :  Kum. Aditi Suresh
18.	<b>ij Smt. G. Lakshmi Ammal Memorial :</b> (Instituted by Sri. G. Sundaresan) <b>ijj Smt. Mangalam Govindaswamy Endowment</b> (Instituted by Sri. T. S. Krishnaswamy) Group I (Age 10-15 yrs)	1 <sup>st</sup> Prize :  Mast. Tejasvi. S.
19.	<b>Smt. Shanta Sethuraman Memorial :</b> (Instituted by Sri. T. S. Krishnaswamy) Group II (Age 15-20 yrs)	1 <sup>st</sup> Prize :  Kum. Smrithi. S.
<b>MRIDANGAM</b>		
20.	<b>Sri. Vellore Ramabhadran Endowment :</b> (Instituted by Sri. Vellore Ramabhadran) Group I (Age 9-13 yrs)	1 <sup>st</sup> Prize : 2 <sup>nd</sup> Prize : Mast. N. Ramanujam Mast. Pramod Shivkumar

Sr. No.	Title of Endowment / Memorial	Prize Winners
<b>MRIDANGAM (Contd.) :</b>		
21.	<b>T. S. Nandakumar's Percussive Art Centre :</b> <b>Endowment</b> (Instituted by Sri. T. S. Nandakumar) Group II (Age 13-18 yrs)	1 <sup>st</sup> Prize :  Mast. Krishnaraj Hariharan
<b>HINDUSTANI VOCAL</b>		
22.	<b>Group I</b> (Age 10-15 yrs)	1 <sup>st</sup> Prize : 2 <sup>nd</sup> Prize : Kum. Uttara Ramachandran Mast. Dhruvin Shah
23.	<b>Group II</b> (Age 15-20 yrs)	1 <sup>st</sup> Prize : Kum. Jyotika. P. Shamma
24.	<b>Group III</b> (Age 20yrs & above)	1 <sup>st</sup> Prize : 2 <sup>nd</sup> Prize : Smt. Asavari Amit Phadke Miss. Maneesha. R. Kulkarni
<b>SITAR</b>		
25.	<b>Group II</b> (Age 15-20 yrs)	1 <sup>st</sup> Prize :  Mr. Budhaditya Konar
<b>TABLA</b>		
26.	<b>Group I</b> (Age 10-15 yrs)	1 <sup>st</sup> Prize : 2 <sup>nd</sup> Prize : 3 <sup>rd</sup> Prize : Mast. Sai Raman Mast. Pushkar Jadhav { a) Mast. Rupakshyam Thakur b) Mast. Gourav. D. Kulkarni
27.	<b>Group II</b> (Age 15-20 yrs)	1 <sup>st</sup> Prize :  Kum. Swarupa Ananth



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## A few tips on good parenting.

- ✓ Show the compassion, honesty, generosity and openness you want your child to have.
- ✓ Eat together as often as possible. Meals are a great time to talk and bond.
- ✓ Reward good behaviour. Love, appreciation, and thanks go a long way - even for kids who think themselves too old for hugs.
- ✓ Don't expect perfection from yourself or your child.
- ✓ Keep a positive attitude about your ability to be a parent. Trust your instincts.
- ✓ Get to know your child's friends and their parents, so you're familiar with their activities.
- ✓ Provide your child with the gift of a lifetime - UTI's Children's Career Plan.

Raising kids today is arguably harder than ever before. But, there are ways to help ease the stress and strain of raising your little ones through good parenting - which also includes providing them with a secure start for the next stage of life - adulthood.

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